

A booth at a Chinese restaurant, Williamson and Levene are seated at the booth.

Williamson (pause) What about the other two?

Levene What two?

Williamson Four. You had four leads. One kicked out, one the *judge*, you say . . .

Levene . . . you want to see the court records? John? Eh? You want to go down . . .

Williamson . . . no . . .

Levene . . . do you want to go down-town . . . ?

Williamson . . . no . . .

Levene . . . then . . .

Williamson . . . I only . . .

Levene . . . then what is this 'you say' shit, what is that? (Pause.) What is that . . . ?

Williamson All that I'm saying . . .

Levene What is this 'you say'? A deal kicks out . . . I got to eat. *Shit*, Williamson . . . *Shit You*, Moss . . . Roma . . . look at the *sheets* . . . look at the *sheets*. Nineteen eighty, eighty-one . . . eighty-two . . . six months of eighty-two . . . who's there? Who's up there?

Williamson Roma.

Levene Under him?

Williamson Moss.

Williamson Shelly . . .

Levene . . . and what is that, John? What? Bad *luck*. That's all it is. I pray in your *life* you will never find it runs in streaks. That's what it does, that's all it's doing. Streaks. I pray it misses you. That's all I want to say.

Williamson Not lately it isn't.

Levene Bullshit. John. Bullshit. April, September 1981. It's *me*. It isn't *fucking* Moss. Due respect, he's an *order taker*, John. He *talks*, he talks a good game, look at the *board*, and it's *me*, John, it's *me* . . .

- How does Mamet's use of language give the audience a deeper insight into Levene's character at this point in the play?

Roma (to Levene) You were saying? (Pause.) Come on. Come on, you got them in the kitchen, you got the stats spread out, you're in your shirtsleeves, you can *smell* it. Huh? Snap out of it, you're eating her *crumb* cake.

Pause.

Levene I'm eating her *crumb* cake . . .

Roma . . . how was it . . . ?

Levene From the store.

Roma . . . fuck *her* . . .

Levene 'What we have to do is *admit* to ourself that we see that opportunity . . . and *take* it. (Pause.) And that's it. And we *sit* there . . . (Pause.) I got the pen out . . .

Roma Always Be Closing . . .

Levene That's what I'm *saying*. The *old* ways. The *old* ways . . . convert the mother fucker . . . sell him . . . sell him . . . *make him sign the check*. (Pause.) The . . . Bruce, Harriett . . . the kitchen, blah: They got their money in *government* bonds . . . I say *fuck* it, we're going to go the whole route. I plait it out eight units. Eighty-two grand. I tell them. 'This is now. This is that *thing* that you've been dreaming of, you're going to find that suitcase on the train, the guy comes in the door, the bag that's full of money. This is it, *Harriett* . . .'

Roma (reflective) Harriett . . .

Levene *Bruce* . . . I don't want to fuck *around* with you. I don't want to *go round* this, and *pussyfoot* around the thing, you have to look back on this. I do, too. I came here to do good for you and me. For *both* of us. Why take an interim position? *The only arrangement I'll accept* is full investment. Period. The whole eight units. I know that you're saying "be safe", I know what you're saying. I know if I left you to yourselfs, you'd say "come back tomorrow" and when I walked out that door, you'd make a cup of *coffee* . . . you'd sit *down* . . . and you'd think "let's be safe . . ." and not to disappoint me you'd go *one* unit or maybe two, because you'd become scared because you'd met possibility. But this

won't do, and that's not the subject . . . Listen to this, I actually said this: 'That's not the subject of our *evening* together.' Now I handed them the pen. I held it in my hand. I turned the contract eight units eighty-two grand. 'Now I want you to sign.' (Pause.) I sat there. Five minutes. Then, I sat there, Ricky, *twenty-two minutes* by the kitchen *clock*. (Pause.) Twenty-two minutes by the kitchen clock. Not a word, not a *motion*. What am I thinking? 'My arm's getting tired'? No. I *did* it. Like in the *old* days, Ricky. Like I was taught . . . Like, like, like I *used* to do . . . I did it.

Roma Like you taught me . . .

Levene Bullshit, you're . . . No. That's raw . . . well, if I *did*, them I'm *glad* I did. I, *well*. I locked on them. All on them, nothing on me. All my thoughts are on them. I'm holding the last thought that I spoke: 'Now is the time.' (Pause.) They signed, Ricky. It was *great*. It was fucking great. It was like they wilted all at once. No *gesture* . . . nothing. Like together. They, I swear to God, they both kind of *imperceptibly stamped*. And he reaches and takes the pen and signs, he passes it to her, she signs. It was so fucking solemn. I just let it sit. I nod like this. I nod again. I grasp his hands. I shake his hands. I grasp *her* hands. I nod at her like this. 'Bruce . . . Harriett . . . I'm beaming at them. I'm nodding like this. I point back in the living-room, back to the sideboard. (Pause.) *I didn't fucking know there was a sideboard there!* He goes back, he brings us a drink. Little shotglasses. A pattern in 'em. And we toast. In silence.

Pause.

Levene . . . Ah fuck.

Roma That was a great sale, Shelly.

Pause.